

Subject: support Jordan Lake rules
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To: <Rich.Gannon@ncmail.net>

To members of Environmental Management Commission:

We live and own land on Travis Creek, a tributary of the Haw River in Alamance County in the watershed of Jordan Lake. The area provides nutrient pollution to the river and incidentally to Jordan Lake. Local officials are too tied to development interests to do anything about it, but the state of North Carolina can! I urge you to do so.

Our concerns are for the dangerous degradation of the river with its impact on water quality for people, ecology of wildlife, quality of life for the Piedmont and overall survival of things we both cherish and depend on in North Carolina.

Please treat the cleanup with the urgency it deserves. That's what you're there for!

You are aware, no doubt, that 25 creeks and sections of the Haw River that feed it have become so polluted that they had to be listed on the Federal 'Impaired Waters' list. This listing and an earlier state law, the 1997 Clean Water Responsibility Act, mandate that the lake be cleaned up by reducing nutrients—the nitrogen and phosphorus that have 'over fertilized' the lake and led to algae blooms.

Algae blooms and even fish kills in the lake and upstream show that we're running out of time. And cleanup efforts have already lagged 10 years behind schedule because of disputes over who's responsible and how to get the lake cleaned up.

We're all responsible--the pollution comes from sewage treatment plants and runoff from streets and buildings and farms where we all live. More than 65 permitted wastewater treatment operations release more than 75 million gallons of waste per day into the streams that flow into Jordan Lake. Polluted runoff is a growing problem in our watershed. This untreated water runs into streams every time it rains, carrying whatever it came into contact with on the way—fertilizer and pesticides from lawns, pet waste, heavy metals from car exhaust. We are more than willing to restrict our pollution of streams; this is not just something "someone else" should do.

North Carolina should require that wastewater treatment plants upstream from the lake reduce nitrogen by 2011. The proposed rules would allow water treatment plants to wait until 2016 to make the needed reductions in nitrogen - and that's far too slow. The Lake is already impaired – it can't wait until 2016 for less nitrogen pollution

We support controls on polluted runoff from existing development. Scientific models show Jordan Lake will never be healthy unless runoff from current development is reduced. These controls consist of various sizes of biological and engineered filters that slow down the flow of rain water, filter out soil suspended in it, and allow natural processes to clean up the water before it flows into a stream. Improvements like "rain gardens" and other green measures will make our cities and towns more attractive to live in - and clean up local creeks as well.

During the past few years, we personally observed road builders (paid by the state) and private developers constructing roads and buildings with no screens! The results are still in the creek in our backyard: heavy silt instead of the coarse sand on the creek bottom and an absence of easily-seen species (like damsel flies). This is not right.

We need strong rules now, and no more delays.

Thank you for your attention.

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